Meteorological Romance From Yellow Medicine County.

WHERE WEATHER SHARPS LIVE

Howard Fielding Tells How a Modest Minion of Uncle Jerry Rusk Was Lad to Plant Beans.

We are all fairly well acquainted We know, for instance, that ser Dunn, of New York, is the man sends so many people down to Copey Island without umbrellas on the of a hard rain, that the gentlein charge of the weather bureau Boston has to take down his in shorthand during the spring to the frequent changes in the r it is a device of the Columbian e to boom the world's fair. things we learn from the



under Uncle Jerry Rusk, about whom mo human being outside the departent has the remotest chance, to know anything, since they are mentioned only in the regular published reports, of which not more than 71,000,000 copies re annually distributed.

I refer to the simple rustics who receive appointments and consignments of apparatus, but no salaries. It is a fact that several hundred farmers are taking notes all the time in the interlests of Uncle Jerry, and are collecting much valuable information. I learned of this from a gentleman who is traveling through the west for the benefit of his health, which would be seriously impaired, so his physician says, by go-ing to jail in New York. In his last let-

he told me the story of Jake Allen. Jake was appointed weather observer in June. His district includes as much as he can attend to of Yellow Medicine county, Minn. Jake is a New Englander, and is thoroughly trustworthy, ex-cept when he has something to sell. His neighbors are almost all of the same persuasion, for some parts of Minnesota are so much like New England that it is impossible to tell the difference except by the quality of the liquer which is a little worse, but not

Jake was informed by his letter of appointment that he would receive certain meteoro.ogical instruments free, and might buy as many more as be wanted. It did not take him long to disseminate among his neighbors the information that he was in the government's service, and that he was to be the custodian of valuable scientific apparatus which only the most cultured and intelligent people could handle satisfactorily. Naturally he became at once an object of interest and envy. There was the usual country store which was devoted to loating and any other business that might properly come before a meeting of the citizens.

One evening, as the usual assemblage sat about the door of the store, the excompany drove up in his wagon and delivered a box for Jake Allen. It was prepaid by the government, and was at once halled as the receptable of the instruments for the new meteorological station. When Jake pried the cover off this box and brought its ovetents to the light of a kerosene lamp and a lantern there was more excitement in the store than it had known in all its history. Probably the whole outfit was not worth over two dollars and a half, but the things were so queer



TAMPERINGSWITH THE WPATRER

of the beholders. That Jake should have the exclusive privilege of fooling with these delicate and costly instru mento was enteremed a personal grievance by every one of the gentlemen remark. There was so much jealousy in the atmosphere that the clouds of tobacco smoke were green around the

"Nay, Jake Allen," said old man Batwhat's the use o' them things, any water

They're to tell about the weather."

"An you understand 'em, thorough,

Sartin I do, or I wouldn't be whar I

am to-day in the confidence of the gore-

tinued old man Batterson. 'you jest fingers rather than forks, and give a look at them things an' tell me what very ingenious excuse for the practice. the recather's goin' ter be day arter ter. Forks, they say, have been in some

"But," protested Jake, "them things. is ter tell what the weather is after-

"Tell what the weather is afterter say the giver ment has shipped Backwards? No. of: you don't under, and tear rather than cut their roasted stand the instermints. Yer ain't fit for I fowis.

HIS EYE IS GREEN yor place." The crowd sided with Battery They nearly emvisced Jake that if he crowd that when he had studied the nent's instructions over again he would endeavor to keep them posted on

the weather at least a week in advance. Then Jake took the instrument and set up his weather observation bureau on a platform not far from his house. There was a thermometer which marked the maximum and minimum temperature in red ink, so that a fellow could sit in the shade of a tree during hot days and let the thermometer do the work. There was an instrument of great simplicity in which to measure the rainfall and an anemometer to de termine the velocity of the wind. The problem, then, which presented itself to Jake after he had set up his little weath er shop was how to tell, from the way the wind blew yesterday, what it would do in the remainder of the week This was not very easy in a country where cyclones had been known t grow to full maturity in fifteen min nutes. Jake had been a fair sort of guesser at the weather from the cob webs on the grass and the feelings in his rheumatic shoulder, but he now felt that science and his neighbors required something more accurate of him Of course, this made Batterson all the

more enraged against Jake, and led him to think of novel plans of getting square. As a preliminary he investigated the apparatus by the aid of a lantern one night after Jake had gone to bed. He discovered that by holding his lantern under the bulb of the ther mometer he could secure a report on the temperature of that region which would be sure to excite interest when it should be forwarded to the chief observer of the state. The next thing he brought a powerful bellows and a can of water. Next morning Jake took from his instruments a temperature of 108 degrees, a rainfall of three inches and a maximum wind velocity of fifty miles an hour although the previous night had been calm, cloudless and mild. Following this he plugged the anemometer so that it would not go, and it recorded no wind at all, although several trees had been blown down during the night. Jake regarded some of these phenomena as curious, but he was too good a scientist to trust his own observation against instruments of precision guaranteed by the government.

Then Old Man Batterson caught eleven small toads and put them into the rain indicator, whereupon Jake reported another of those mysterious showers which are continuously being noted in the west and printed in the papers showers which bring down



strange and grewsome objects from the heavens.

The state weather observer wrote to Jake after this, and recommended that he change his drink or take the pledge for awhile, but Jake replied that he was a sober and industrious farmer, and a weather observer at least as good as could be found in the state of Minnesota. But the next morning, when he found four young snakes in the indicator, and a temperature of one hundred and forty degrees marked in red ink on the thermometer, he began to suspect that somebody was tampering with the returns. He thought the matter over, and decided that the trick amounted to treason against the United States, and gave him the right to inflict any sort of punishment upon the crimfml. So he loaded a large caliber shot gun with seed beans and lay in wait for the enemy.

Meanwhile the state observer had de cided to investigate the remarkable meteorological conditions in Yellow Medicine county, so he sent one of his treated assistants down to have a con ference with Jake. The able meteorolo gist arrived at the store in the express wagon about six o'clock in the evening. He took supper at a neighboring house, smoked a pipe, and then started to walk, by direction, over to Jake's place. Passing through that distinguished scientist's domains, he chanced to observe the platform with the weather apparatus, and, guessing rightly what it was, he resolved to have a look at it by moonlight. He was just stooping over the rain indicator when he heard a report like that of a cannon, and felt a large number of painful sensations in various parts of his corporeal being. At the same moment he heard a voice exclaim: "So you're the son of a gun that's been tryin' to defraud the gover'ment. I'll l'arn ye to interfere with the Yellow Modicine weather bureau!"

Some hours later, when the neighbors had dropped in to help Jake dig seed beans out of his visitor's back, there was nobody more efficient in this charitable work than old man Batterson. Indeed, he extracted those beans with so gentle a hand that he was nominated and approved as Jake's successor in office when the agent was able to go back to the city.

HOWARD FIELDING.

A Very Peculiar Notice.

Some one has estimated that at least one-foorth of the world knows nothing of the use of forlis, and fully one-quarter of the men, women and children in It eat with their fingers. The Egyptrans and Turks pride themselves on "Wal, then, such bein' the case," con- their cleanliness in the use of their man's mouth, and you have to depend on your servants for their clouning. These people wash their hands before altting down to table or squatting around the meal on the floor, and they wards?" second Batterson. "Why, any take up the moracle of food with thin cossed fixed can do that. Do you mean pieces of bread, rolling it around such food or sopping it in the scup. They them things here to help you prophesy use their hands in aiding in the carring

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